

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0213

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV PINT AO

SUBJECT: MPLA DEVELOPMENTS: NETO NEGOTIATES WITH ANDRADE

1. SUMMARY. AGOSTINHO NETO ASKED JOAQUIM PINTO DE ANDRADE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. ANDRADE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE "REVOLTA ACTIVA" HAVE REFUSED TO COOPERATE WITH NETO UNLESS HE AGREES TO ACCEPT THEM AS A LEGITIMATE CURRENT OF OPINION WITHIN THE PARTY. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER THE LUSAKA CONGRESS OF THE MPLA IN AUGUST OF 1974, NETO HELD AN INTERREGIONAL CONGRESS IN EASTERN ANGOLA IN SEPTEMBER, WHERE HE GATHERED TOGETHER LOYALISTS AND SET UP A NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE. ASIDE FROM LUCIO LARA, NONE OF THE MEMBERS HAS MUCH REPUTATION OR EXPERIENCE. NO ONE DOUBTS LAR'S INTELLIGENCE, BUT HE IS SUPPOSED TO BE FLAWED BY A DEEP BITTERNESS AND A TERRIBLE DESIRE FOR REVENGE AGAINST WHITES. LOPO DE NASCIMENTO, THE MPLA MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL IS THOUGHT OF AS A PLEASANT YOUNG MAN, BUT HE HAS NOT STATURE, NO EXPERIENCE AND LITTLE INCLINATION TO STAND UP TO ANYBODY AT THIS POINT.

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ERMINIO ESCORCIO, ANOTHER MEMBER OF NETO'S INNER GROUP IS

DISMISSED BY SOME WHO KNOW HIM AS AN IMBECILE. NETO REALIZES THAT HS IS IN REAL TROUBLE FOR LACK OF GOOD PEOPLE AND IS TRYING TO INDUCE THE ANDRADE FACTION TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN POLITICS.

3. AS I HAVE PIECED TOGETHER THE STORY, NETO PASSED THE WORD TO JOAQUIM PINTO DE ANDRADE BEFORE OR DURING THE ALVOR CONFERENCE THAT HE WANTED HIM IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, PROBABLY AS THE MPLA MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL, OR COLLEGIUM. ANDRADE SENT BACK WORD THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT ON THE CONDITION THAT THE "REVOLTA ACTIVA", OR ANDRADE FACTION, BE LEGITIMATIZED WITHIN THE PARTY AND THAT ITS VIEWS AND OPINIONS HAVE WEIGHT IN PARTY COUNCILS. NETO REFUSED AND WENT AHEAD WITH THE SELECTION OF THE PEOPLE NOW IN THE GOVERNMENT.

4. A FEW DAYS AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IN LUANDA, NETO GRASPED THAT THINGS WERE NOT GOING WELL FOR MPLA AND HE CALLED SOME OLD FRIENDS AMONG THE REVOLTA ACTIVA AND ASKED TO TALK WITH THEM. THEY ALL REFUSED AND TOLD HIM TO TALK WITH ANDRADE. NETO THEN ARRANGED TO MEET WITH ANDRADE WHO BY THIS TIME HAD RETURNED TO LUANDA. NETO REITERATED HIS REQUEST THAT JOAQUIM PARTICIPATE. ANDRADE AGREED, BUT REITERATED HIS DEMAND THAT THE ENTIRE FACTION AND ITS OPINIONS BE ACCEPTED AND ADDED A FEW OTHERS.

5. ANDRADE AND NETO AGREED TO NOMINATE DELEGATES TO NEGOTIATE A FORMULA ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. THE ANDRADE FACTION HAS THREE PRINCIPAL DEMANDS: 1) EASE OUT LARA AND ESCORCIO; THEY NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE THROWN OUT OF THE PARTY, BUT THEY MUST BE PUT SOMEWHERE WHERE THEY WILL NOT HAVE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES; 2) LEGITIMIZE THE REVOLTA ACTIVA; AND 3) ALL PARTY DECISIONS MUST BE TAKEN DEMOCRATICALLY. THE NEGOTIATIONS JUST BEGAN A FEW DAYS AGO AND STILL ARE GOING ON. THERE APPARENTLY IS AN AGREEMENT THAT NO MATTER WHICH WAY THE NEGOTIATIONS GO A STATEMENT WILL BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS.

6. THE IMPLICATIONS TO MPLA OF THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE GREAT. NETO HAS NOBODY WITH ANY PRESTIGE OR CAPABILITY AND THE PARTY NEEDS THE ANDRADE FACTION IF MPLA IS TO HAVE A CHANCE AGAINST THE WELL ORGANIZED UNITA DRIVE FOR VOTES AND THE GROWING ACCEPTANCE OF FNLA AMONG BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES. THE ANDRADE PEOPLE HAVE NO

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INTENTION OF LEAVING THE PARTY APPARATUS IN THE HANDS OF NETO IF THEY CAN HELP IT. THEY HOPE TO BE ABLE TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE CENTER AND RELEGATE HIM TO THE ROLE OF PARTY HERO AND ELDER STATESMAN. I HAVE REAL DOUBTS THAT THE ANDRADE FACTION CAN TAKE AWAY FROM NETO ALL THE LEVERS OF POWER. THEY HAVE NOT SHOWN MUCH STOMACH FOR POLITICAL INFIGHTING, WHILE NETO WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO RETAIN POWER. ANDRADE AND COMPANY DO HAVE A USEFUL WEAPON - DENIAL - NOW THAT NETO SEES HIS PRESENT CADRE IS NOT UP TO THE JOB THAT

MUST BE DONE. IT IS A SAD COMMENTARY ON NETO'S LEADERSHIP THAT
MPLA, WHICH WAS TOUTED AS HAVING THE BEST TALENT AND THE GREATEST
DEPTH AMONG THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS NOT ONLY IS THE WEAKEST
GROUP IN THE GOVERNMENT, IT HAS THE REPUTATION OF A GANG OF
TOUGHS.
KILLORAN

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